

MIDSTATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

MARC

Ham Radio News from Johnson County, Indiana

December 1993

Volume 5

Number 12

NOVEMBER VE UPGRADES

Phillip Abrams	Napoleon	NC Tech
John Cooper	Flat Rock	Tech
Daniel Dye	Rushville	NC Tech
Michaela Dye	Rushville	NC Tech
Robert Hays N9RDT	Worthington	Advanced
Herold Losche	Franklin	NC Tech
Donald Ping N9QKM	Camby	Advanced
Julia Rodenbeck	Mooreville	Tech
John Wilson	Indianapolis	NC Tech

FCC PROBES VE'S

Volunteer examiners are suspended

The FCC has invalidated the licenses and license up-grades of 21 people after an investigation of irregularities at four VE test sessions in southern California in June and August, 1993.

The sessions involved both the ARRL and W5YI VECs and a number of volunteer examiners have had their accreditations suspended as a result.

According to John Johnston, FCC chief of the Personal Radio Branch, "Your action will help prevent future occurrences and assure that amateur licenses are granted only to those who are truly qualified. You've also sent a strong signal the ARRL VEC is vigilant in its oversight to keep the volunteer testing system at the highest level of integrity."

from the November ARRL Letter

Merry Christmas



VE TEAM REPORT

The local VE testing team has tested 543 applicants since 1989 with 373 upgrades for 68 percent. In 1993 the team tested 144 with 88 upgrades for 61 percent. Here are the results by license class:

	1989-93:		1993:	
CLASS	PASSED	PCT.	PASSED	PCT.
Novice	5	1	2	2
NC Tech	115	30	42	47
Tech	120	32	23	26
General	64	17	9	10
Advanced	42	11	10	11
Extra	27	7	2	2
TOTAL:	373		88	

The above does not include those who passed only a part of what they were attempting.

The team will resume testing on the 3rd Saturday in March of 1994. See you there!

NEWEST MARC MEMBERS

The following amateurs have joined MARC since the last newsletter. Please welcome:

Bob Huxley, No call, T, Indianapolis; John Welch, N9TDL, T, Indianapolis; John Shaw, N9MEV, T, Franklin; Jewel Judkins, KB9ITF, T, Indianapolis; Alvin Koffman, KA9QLQ, A, Columbus; and Dean Strietelmeier, N9VDS, T, Indianapolis.

PUERTO RICO TELESCOPE



Our guest speaker for the December meeting will be Joe Vergara, KA9ZPA. Joe and his family recently visited his native home in Puerto Rico.

During his two week stay Joe had the opportunity to visit many of the natural wonders of the island. One of those sites could almost be considered the Eighth Wonder of the World.

Nestled in the mountains of northern Puerto Rico is the world's largest radio-radar telescope. The Arcibo Observatory is used to detect and analyze radio waves from outer space. Joe video taped his visit through and around the enormous facility and will give us a video tour!

NEW 400 BAND PLAN

A new band-plan for 440 megahertz? Why not! As more Indiana hams have jumped onto 440 repeaters, launched weather balloons and began sending live pictures through the air the allocated 440 megahertz frequencies have become a mish-mash of cluttered users and often frustrated hams.

And as packet becomes more popular the Indiana repeater council has decided to develop an all new 440 band-plan. Council chairman, Steve Riley, WA9CWE, met with members of the Indiana amateur tv association in November to discuss their needs in the 440 band.

The council intends to reallocate the 440 frequencies used for packet, ATV and repeaters. According to ATV members the fast scan tv requires more spectrum than other modes. As packet digipeters become more popular the available frequency spectrum is becoming limited.

Action is being taken now to develop a workable band-plan. Steve Riley will be taking input on this subject for the next few weeks. Stay tuned for further updates.

CUP SALES



Just in time for Christmas. It's your last opportunity, this year, to purchase the official Mid-state Amateur Radio Club Coffee Cup. Jack Parker, NT9J, still has an ample supply of the cups available. "They make great stocking stuffers, and would look good in your ham shack or at work." Jack says. "Even if you don't drink coffee they can be used to hold pencils. Or, buy one and give it to a prospective ham."

The sales of the cups and the "sales pitch" will continue until all of the cups have found a good home. You can purchase additional cups from Jack, NT9J or from Mac, NV9K. It's the Mac & Jack Official Midstate ARC cups sales.

HAM OF THE YEAR



Congratulations to Dave White, KB9GMS, for being honored as Hendricks County Ham of the Year. Dale and

eleven other amateurs in Hendricks County were honored at a December 13th awards banquet sponsored by the Hendricks County Sheriff and the county commissioners.

This was the second year that local hams have been recognized for their outstanding contributions to the community through ARES, RACES, weather nets, and general participation in community events.

Dave and the other distinguished hams received plaques and certificates for their efforts. The banquet was held at Frank and Mary's restaurant in Pittsboro, Indiana.

Despite his Hendricks county address Dale often attends the Mid-state ARC meetings and participates in Johnson County special events. Our congratulations to Dale White, Hendricks County Ham Of The Year!

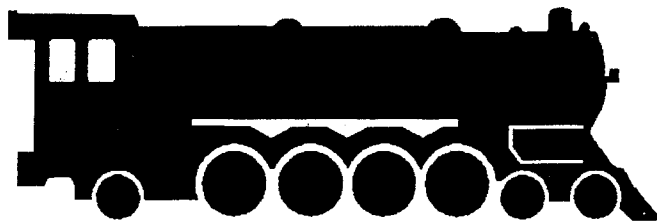
SPREADING THE WORD



Tom Daugherty KF9NF, has been spreading the word about ham radio in central Indiana! Tom is a member of a Toastmaster Club and recently gave a presentation about our hobby to the Exchange Club in Greenwood.

Tom discussed ham radio in general and mentioned the Mid-State club and its activities. The audience was particularly interested in his account of the part played by Jack NT9J and Ralph N9RNI in the Columbus 500 voyage aboard the *Tievoli*.

The Railroad Telegrapher



Many retain nostalgic memories of visits to the railroad depot; the grimy waiting room, the ticket agent behind the wicket and, over in the corner, that fascinating character with the green eyeshade who made sense of strange clicks and clacks. Yes, when locomotives belched smoke and cinders, and passengers wore suits and ties, the railroad telegrapher was a mainstay.

Nothing happened in his heyday that didn't involve the telegrapher; with a straight key and sounder, he handled clearances for train movements, waybills, passenger counts—just about everything!

Unlike a *wireless* Morse operator, the landline telegrapher didn't listen to dits and dahs; instead, he counted silences. The sounders were moving-armature devices that made one sound, a sort of 'clack', when they went down and a subtly different 'click' when they returned to their rest position. The space between the clacks and clicks made the difference between dots and dashes, and the ability to "hear" those silences made the railroad telegrapher's skills unique.

Things have changed, but if you look carefully in the right nooks and crannies, usually in private collections or museums, you can still find railroad keys and sounders.

In Tampa Florida, where a large section of the State Fairgrounds is set aside as "Cracker Country", a re-creation of life in rural Florida at the turn of the century is on exhibit.

One building, the old Okahumpka railroad station, has an actual telegrapher's station. It's complete down to the straight key, the sounder and its associated "Prince Albert can" resonator, and even a telephone-on-scissors stand. The only thing missing is an operator.

"Cracker Country" wants to bring the telegrapher's station back to life by inviting any of the old telegraphers to operate the old equipment and to explain how things were to thousands of visitors to the State Fair in February 1994. Anyone interested should call Ann at (813) 621-7821, extension 276.

—Arjay Morgan, N3LKZ, ARNS

The Wouff Hong



In an institution as old as Amateur Radio, traditions and symbols of the art appear and become part of it. Our traditions are many, among them our long record of self-policing, our dedication to public service in experimentation, our instant response to the

call of our country in time of war.

But of the symbols, only one, aside from the ARRL diamond, has become a part and parcel of the framework of Amateur Radio, the symbol of its finest traditions, its long and glorious history. That symbol is the Wouff Hong!

Visitors to Headquarters and to W1AW seeing either the original or one of the many replicas in our buildings, ask what it means. New members of the Royal Order of the Wouff Hong, initiated during the midnight convocations of the Order at League Conventions, ask, "But where did it come from, in the beginning?"

It started back in 1917, in the very earliest days of the ARRL and QST, when an anonymous amateur, writing under the title "The Old Man", created a wonderful series of humorous stories in the magazine. In a pithy, irascible style he assailed all that struck him as criticizable about ham radio operation of the period in his famous "Rotten Radio" series, beloved to this day by all who read it. He pitilessly exposed the poor operating practices of the day, yet did it in a way which drew chuckles even from those recognizing themselves as the special targets of his ire.

In one of those stories, "Rotten QRM", he launched forth with examples of some of the poor sending cluttering up the band in a particular QSO to which he was listening. The gibberish included the words "wouff hong" which, apparently, was being used by

someone on somebody else. It turned out to be one of those priceless pieces of spontaneous word invention. Instantly, it caught on with the gang.

Although T.O.M. himself admitted at the time he didn't know exactly what a wouff hong was, it quickly became something with which both to attack bad operating practices and to discipline their perpetrators.

Within three months, the editor of QST found it necessary to write an editorial on the growing demand from the membership for wouff hong. How rapidly this situation might have developed had not World War I intervened is a matter of speculation.

But the tradition had been established, the Wouff Hong created in the minds of thousands of amateurs as some mythical instrument of torture to be used in enforcing good operating practice in Amateur Radio.

When QST resumed after the war, one of its first contributors was T.O.M. In an early 1919 issue he contributed an article "Rotten Starting" to work off steam on the slowness with which our government was getting around to let us operate again.

At the conclusion of this article appeared the following: "In the meantime...I am sending you a specimen of a real live Wouff Hong which came to light out here when we started to get our junk out of cold storage. Keep it in the Editorial sanctum where you can lay

your hands on it quickly in an emergency. We will be allowed to transmit soon and then you will need it."

The object was duly received at Hq. The Editor, fully mindful of the historic significance of the occasion, took the instrument to one of the first Board meetings, in New York, May 3, 1919, subsequently duly reporting in QST that "each face noticeably blanched when the awful Wouff Hong was...laid on the table". By an action still a part of the League's official records, that Board voted that the Wouff Hong be framed and placed on display in the Hq. offices of the League. There it remains to this day.

We know the significance of the Wouff Hong. We don't know the significance of its weird shape. Not even the beloved T.O.M. (revealed after his death, as none other than our first president Hiram Percy Maxim) ever explained that. Nor was the precise manner of its use ever prescribed, although it perhaps may be guessed with a little imagination.

But as the years passed, it continued to grow in the affections of amateurs the country over, old-timer and youngster alike. It became the inspiration of the Royal Order of the Wouff Hong, the amateur secret society of the ARRL convention. Today, it is thoroughly entrenched in the lore of Amateur Radio as its most sacred symbol.

The Wouff Hong! -- see it when you next visit ARRL Headquarters.

from the ARRL NEWSLETTER



REASONS WHY THE RADIO WON'T WORK?

"I noticed it wasn't working when I tried to radio in that my antenna got hit by lightning"

"It seems to happen every time I drive into a tunnel"

"Well, I did wire it to the battery backwards, but it was only for a minute."

"Rather than blow a lot of money on an amplifier, I figured I could get more power by wiring it to 24 volts instead of just 12."

"I just made 3 or 4 dandy splices in my antenna coax."

"Why run all over town looking for a fuse when you have a perfectly good wad of tinfoil in your lunch bag."

"The mike cord is a little frayed, but that shouldn't matter 'cause I TALK REAL LOUD!"

"The wind kept blowing my antenna over so I put an old copper pipe over it for support."

"The little transmit light on my HT made a dandy flashlight when I spent a few hours looking for my keys."

"What on/off switch?"

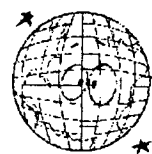


NEW PACKET BBS STATIONS

There are numerous PBBS's in and around the Indianapolis area on the many assigned packet frequencies. Johnson County did not have a PBBS for a couple of years. The first one (WB5VZT) was discontinued due to lack of support. Most owners and operators of PBBS' will not accept monetary support. The support required to maintain a PBBS is USER support.

What is required for a PBBS? At least a 386 computer with a minimum of 4 MB of memory, a large disk storage area; all this dedicated to the PBBS. The number of radios and TNCs depends upon the coverage of the PBBS. Of course the radios require antennas and power sources. An extensive PBBS software program is a must.

The Johnson County's PBBS (Part of the ASBDG Network) consists of: 'My World' PBBS in Greenwood, Indiana (WB5VZT) and 'The Mean Old Man' PBBS (KA9ZPA) on Franklin Road.



The 'My World' PBBS equipment consists of a custom built 386-40 AT, Kantronics KPC-4 and KPC-3 TNCs, and Kenwood TS-690S, TM-241A, TM-331A, TM231A radios. The antennas are 2M Cushcraft 11 ele beam, 6M Cushcraft 3 ele beam, 220 Cushcraft 11 ele beam, and a Diamond 2M vertical. Other equipment includes 2 - 50 amp power supplies, an RF Concepts 2M amplifier, and a Motorola UDS V.3224/V.3225 Modem.



The 'The Mean Old Man' PBBS equipment includes a Leading Edge 286-16 AT, a Kantronics' KPC-4 TNC, Kenwood TS-690S, and Yaesu 221R radios. The antennas are a 2M Cushcraft 11 element beam and a Cushcraft 6M ringo. A Mirage 2M amp and a 50 amp power supply are also used. Additional equipment to be added soon is a Custom Built 386 AT, Stacked 2M Cushcraft 11 ele beams, a 2400 bps Modem, and a 220 MHz radio.

Well you say that is all fine and dandy, but all I care about is how, where, and when can I connect? Ok, here goes:

These PBB'S are accessible 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Access may be on 145.510, 51.700, and (317) 887-2208. The 223.600 frequency is for PBBS forwarding only. You may use 145.55 (port 2) to 'TRY' to connect to R0MIR-1. You may use the Netnodes to cross connect to 51.700 and 145.550. We forward to W9OJ PBBS, WW9A PBBS, AND KK9G PBBS. You may forward a message/bulletin to anyplace in the world or receive a message from any place in the world.

There will be an average of 1500 Messages/Bulletins for you to read. House cleaning and maintenance will be performed between midnight and 0100 hrs daily. Personal messages are kept for 10 days, and bulletins are kept for 7 days.

KA9ZPA and WB5VZT installed a 223.600 Node at Trafalger (850 ft) to enhance the Southern Indiana Backbone. This Node

(TRAF:KA9ZPA-3 TheNet) is used by the I.D.E.A. systems (joint agreement between Joe, Bob, and IDEA) for better communications to and from Southern Indiana. This equipment is owned by KA9ZPA and WB5VZT and not affiliated with I.D.E.A. This is in addition to the 6 Meter Network.

Now for those of you that have modems but no packet rigs: The modem is accessible 24 hrs per day (dedicated phone line). You may access the PBBS by modem; You may connect to other packet stations on frequency; You can send and receive packet messages; you can read bulletins and your personal mail. The only requirements are:

(1) To have 100 percent access, you must be a FCC licensed Amateur Radio Operator. All others can not send mail or connect to stations.

(2) Obtain a login (call and password) from the SYSOP.

NOTE: There will also be more restrictive rules, because you are using my equipment and callsign on modem access. - WB5VZT

VOX: A rig feature that is always ON when you leave the shack and your dog has a barking fit! -ARNS





*** What do you get when you cross a porcupine with a tapeworm? Ten feet of barbed wire.

*** YOU ARE A POOR SOUL IF:

You use a rag for a gas cap.

The color of your car is primer.

Your brother in law is also your uncle.

Your family tree is a straight line.

*** The golfer at the clubhouse said, "Oh my God! I sliced my drive and it hit a kid and he got run over and I killed a busload of kids and a bunch of nuns! What am I gonna do?" The golf pro said, "Keep your head down, your left arm straight and follow through!"

*** Conway's Law: In any organization there will always be one person who knows what's going on. This person must be fired!

*** The secret to success is sincerity. Once you can fake that you've got it made!

*** Always hire a RICH attorney but never buy from a RICH salesman.

*** Most projects start out slowly and then sort of taper off...

*** If our knees were on the backs of our legs, what would chairs look like?

*** Then there was this wierd helicopter pilot who got so cold he turned off the fan.

*** Don't do a job too well. You'll get stuck with it!

*** All the best chess players were at a big tournament. They hung out for the first hour in the hallway, bragging to each other about all their recent victories. Suddenly, the hotel manager threw them all out of the hallway. When asked why, he replied: "I hate chess nuts boasting by an open foyer!"

*** Do you thank your lucky stars that you are not superstitious?

*** What do you get when you cross poison ivy with 4 leaf clovers? A rash of good luck!

BUMPER STICKERS:

I'm in no shape to exercise!

Of all things I've lost I miss my mind the most.

Save the Whales! Eat a penguin.

There is no gravity--the earth sucks!

Illiterate??? Write for free help!

Money isn't everything. But it keeps the kids in touch.

CHURCH BULLETINS:

Due to the Rector's illness, Tuesday's healing service will be postponed.

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.

Special thanks are due to the

minister's daughter, who labored the whole evening at the piano, which as usual fell upon her.

A song fest was held at the Methodist church Wednesday.

The eighth graders will be presenting Shakespears's Hamlet in the church basement Friday at 7 PM. All are invited to attend this tragedy.

YOU ARE IN TROUBLE WHEN:

Every one likes your drivers license picture.

You are pigging out at McDonalds by yourself and the manager orders the numbers on the outside sign changed.

Your car horn remains stuck as you pass a group of Hell's Angels on the freeway.

Your blind date turns out to be your ex-wife.

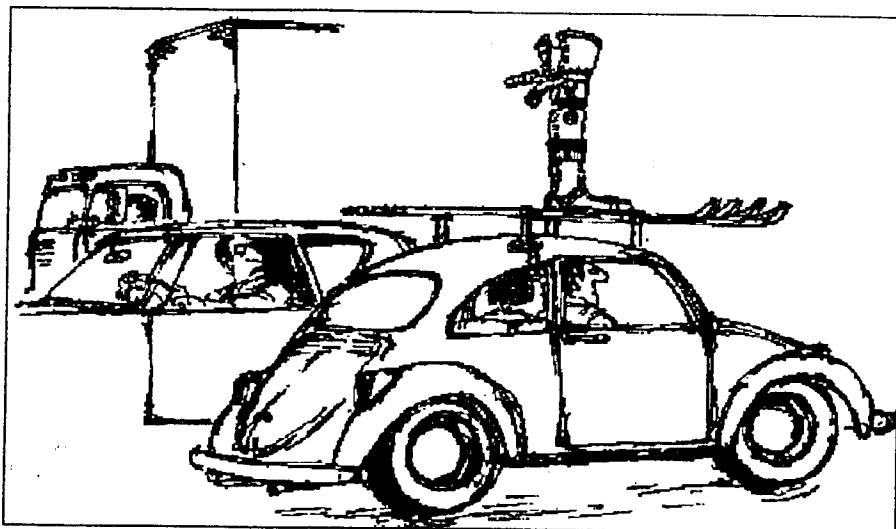
The worst player on the golf course wants to play you for money.

The gypsy fortune teller offers to refund your money.

The boss tells you not to bother to take off your coat.

You walk to work and find your dress is stuck in the back of your pantyhose.

Hospital food starts to taste good.



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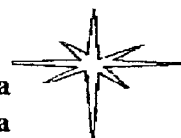
1217 N. Wittfield St. Indianapolis 46229

Phone 898-2338

Fax 898-2338

From the president:

I want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year!



Free doughnuts and coffee at the December meeting! I hope to see you there!

Roy N9PFZ



TRACTOR MOBILE!



The Lawton Oklahoma *Constitution* reported Troy Fehring, N5VIN worked the space shuttle from his tractor late last month.

Fehring told the paper "I didn't have anything to write on, so I jumped out of my tractor, took my screwdriver and scratched it on my toolbox so I wouldn't forget" the time and frequency. The contact was on FM, with astronaut Bill McArthur, KC5ACR.

from the ARRL Letter

DID YOU NOTICE?

Did you notice the color picture and large caption in the December issue of QST magazine showing club members Ralph Talbott, N9RNI and Jack Parker, NT9J?

The two column color photo appears on page 12 of QST showing the two sailor/hams aboard the Tievoli following their historic voyage across the Atlantic ocean participating in the America 500 event.

A third club member, Eric Sluder, KB9BGS, is also mentioned in the caption. During Eric and Jack's three week trip from Spain to the Canary Islands they made several contacts with club members on 20 & 40 meters.

They were using an Icom 720A that was donated for the trip by Dave Wendt, KA9OOH. Ralph used the rig extensively during the entire voyage from Florida to Spain and back.

Ralph now resides in Punta Gorda, Florida and runs charters on the *Tievoli*. If you didn't know, the name *Tievoli* spelled backwards is I LOVE IT!

HAM AMBASSADOR!

When was the last time you talked to someone about ham radio? According to the amateur's code we are progressive, loyal, friendly and patriotic. All are perfect qualifications for being a radio ambassador to our community. And according to one Johnson county ham you don't need to know code or have an extra class license to do it.

Tom Daugherty, KF9NF, is a

member of the Greenwood Toastmasters Club. Toastmasters are people who practice the art of public speaking. Tom says it's easy to speak before a group if you talk about something you like. And Tom likes ham radio.

He recommends that you follow an outline. Don't get too technical. Briefly explain the equipment needed and demonstrate with a prop like your 2-meter radio. Explain how to get the license and basically what you have to know about the rules and operating procedures. With an outline in hand, Tom says, it's easy to fill several minutes. Then let the audience ask questions.

Most churches and schools are always looking for speakers with an interesting topic. So, put on your ambassador hat, you know, the one with your call sign on the front, and start talking ham radio!

Tom will be making an outline available to MARC members at the December meeting who might feel the urge to talk to a community group. Don't be shy. Here's an excellent way to spread the word about one of the world's best hobbies!

BENS WEATHER TIPS

By Ben Woods Channel 8 TV

Starting January 1, 1994 on nearly every cable system that carries WISH-TV Channel 8, The Local Weather Station will make its debut. It will be a separate cable channel (although initially it may share air time with The Weather Channel via Atlanta, GA. on some cable systems).

HAM radio operators with ATV (Amateur TV) equipment currently have the capability to access both the WISH-TV and National Weather Service Radar whenever the Severe Weather Network is activated.

The Local Weather Station will start with those radar displays and some weather maps that are also used on WISH-TV weathercasts. Eventually, weather anchors and special weather/news stories and features will enter The Local Weather Station's programming.

Designed to be viewed in short intervals (except by weather "nuts" like myself), the Local Weather Station should provide valuable information during times of severe weather. Marking the progress of severe thunderstorms and gentle showers alike can enable many to play "forecaster" and predict when their neighborhood will get hit.

The idea for an all-weather station was born from the stalemate in the cable companies and local TV stations talks on TV signal re-transmission. If you recall, cable companies threatened to drop local TV stations rather than pay them a nominal fee for the TV stations' signal. As a compromise, some stations decided not to charge for their broadcast signal, but asked cable companies to carry an additional channel (i.e. The Local Weather Station and WTHR-13's new all news channel).

In other weather news, the long, long, long range outlook for this winter (Dec. through Feb.) calls for temperatures and precipitation to be above average in the Midwestern U.S. (including Indiana). Keep in mind that forecasts of this nature are only about 55 percent accurate (just a little bit better than flipping a coin)!

Ben Woods, WISH TV Meteorologist.

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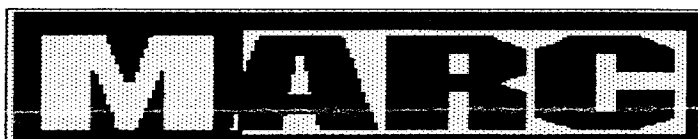
1-(800) 524-4889 Fax (317) 898-3027

TID BITS.....

*** It's great to hear Sandy WA9RDF back on the repeater after surgery! We are looking forward to his complete recovery!

*** Some MARC members are keeping in touch with Pat W9PSD in Florida by monitoring 14.210 at 7:45 on tuesdays and thursdays. Give him a call!

*** Congratulations to Bill N9QED who recently passed his Extra exam at Lebanon!



Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

Post Office Box 836 Franklin, In. 46131

Club Repeater: 146.835

Spark-Gap is published monthly and is available by first class mail to non-members for \$5.00 per year.

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